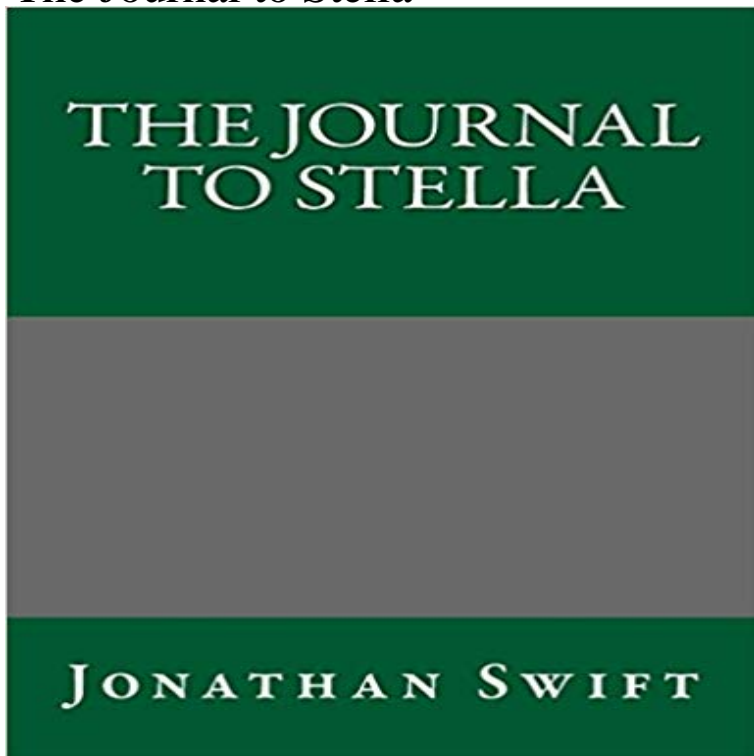


The Journal to Stella



The history of the publication of the Journal to Stella is somewhat curious. On Swifts death twenty-five of the letters, forming the closing portion of the series, fell into the hands of Dr. Lyon, a clergyman who had been in charge of Swift for some years. The letters passed to a man named Wilkes, who sold them for publication. They accordingly appeared in 1766 in the tenth volume of Dr. Hawkesworths quarto edition of Swifts works; but the editor made many changes in the text, including a suppression of most of the little language. The publishers, however, fortunately for us, were public-spirited enough to give the manuscripts (with one exception) to the British Museum, where, after many years, they were examined by John Forster, who printed in his unfinished Life of Swift numerous passages from the originals, showing the manner in which the text had been tampered with by Hawkesworth. Swift himself, too, in his later years, obliterated many words and sentences in the letters, and Forster was able to restore not a few of these omissions. His zeal, however, sometimes led him to make guesses at words which are quite undecipherable. Besides Forsters work, I have had the benefit of the careful collation made by Mr. Ryland for his edition of 1897. Where these authorities differ I have usually found myself in agreement with Mr. Ryland, but I have felt justified in accepting some of Forsters readings which were rejected by him as uncertain; and the examination of the manuscripts has enabled me to make some additions and corrections of my own. Swifts writing is extremely small, and abounds in abbreviations. The difficulty of arriving at the true reading is therefore considerable, apart from the erasures. The remainder of the Journal, consisting of the first forty letters, was published in 1768 by Deane Swift, Dr. Swifts second cousin. These

letters had been given to Mrs. Whiteway in 1788, and by her to her son-in-law, Deane Swift. The originals have been lost, with the exception of the first, which, by some accident, is in the British Museum; but it is evident that Deane Swift took even greater liberties with the text than Hawkesworth. He substituted for Ppt the word Stella, a name which Swift seems not to have used until some years later; he adopted the name Presto for Swift, and in other ways tried to give a greater literary finish to the letters. The whole of the correspondence was first brought together, under the title of the Journal to Stella, in Sheridans edition of 1784. Previous editions of the Journal have been but slightly annotated. Swifts letters abound with allusions to people of all classes with whom he came in contact in London, and to others known to Esther Johnson in Ireland; and a large proportion of these persons have been passed over in discreet silence by Sir Walter Scott and others. The task of the annotator has, of course, been made easier of late years by the publication of contemporary journals and letters, and of useful works of reference dealing with Parliament, the Army, the Church, the Civil Service, and the like, besides the invaluable Dictionary of National Biography. I have also been assisted by a collection of MS. notes kindly placed at my disposal by Mr. Thomas Seccombe. I have aimed at brevity and relevance, but it is hoped that the reader will find all the information that is necessary. Here and there a name has baffled research, but I have been able to give definite particulars of a very large number of peoplenoblemen and ladies in society in London or Dublin, Members of Parliament, doctors, clergymen, Government officials, and others who have hitherto been but names to the reader of the Journal. I have corrected a good many errors in the older notes, but in dealing with so large a number of persons, some of whom it is difficult to identify, I cannot hope that I myself have escaped pitfalls.

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